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THE Saints Guide: OR, *Christ the Rule.* MANIFESTED

By way of *Positions*, *Consectaries* and *Queries*.

Wherein is contained

The Efficacy of acquired Knowledge.
The Mission and Maintenance of Ministers.
And the Power of Magistrates in Spiritual things.

By JOHN WEBSTER.

The Third Edition.

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To all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in Truth and Sincerity.

Dear Souls,

BLessed be the God of Mercies, that it is not the Power of Argument, the Force of Dispute or Eloquence, nor the Efficacy of humane Reason, that can more clearly make out *the things that are freely given to us of God*, than they are by that Spirit that searches all things, *yea even the deep things that are of God*, in the Experience of his Saints, as they all witness, having the same Spirit opening unto them that record which God gave of his Son. Neither are these poor and weak things

Zach. 4.10. (tho we ſhould *not deſpiſe the Day of ſmall things*) made publick upon any ſuch Account, but only as it pleaſed the Lord to draw forth my Spirit, to give Teſtimony with thoſe Truths he had ſealed in my Breaſt, againſt all the Prejudice, Cenſures, and Unrighteous Judgments of Men.

Rom. 8.11. For that Immortal Spirit *which raiſed Jeſus up from the dead*, and quickeneth the Bodies of his Saints, by its own Light, Life, Power, Wiſdom and Strength, worketh *all in all* in his People, ſtands not in any *need* of the weak Inſtrument of Sinful Man's Carnal and Deviliſh Wiſdom: For Joh. 6.63. it is this *Spirit that quickneth, the Fleſh profiteth nothing*. Neither 2 Cor. 10.4. are *the Weapons of* a Believer's *Warfare Carnal, but Mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong Holds, and laying low of every Imagination that ſtands up againſt Chriſt*.

And

And alſo I have uſually in Experience obſerved, that in labouring to make out the Truth by the Force of our Wit, and Arguments, *one Carnal Weapon is but ſet againſt another*, and ſo doth little elſe but ingender *Strife*, and ſtir up *Paſſion*: So that Truth rather receives damage than profit by it. And therefore the Scripture witneſſeth, that Saints *ſhould avoid fooliſh Queſtions, endleſs Genealogies, and Contentions, with perverſe Diſputings, whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Railings, and evil Surmiſings.* Tit. 3. 9. 1 Tim. 1 4. 1 Tim. 6. 4, 5.

And as the Lord in Mercy hath cleared my Spirit from theſe Miſts, ſo he hath led me forth to give my Teſtimony with the reſt of his Saints, in behalf of his Cauſe and Truth, againſt all *Perverſeneſs*, and *Unrighteouſneſs* of Men. For after the Lord about eighteen Years ago, had, in his, wonderful Mercy, brought me

to the ſad Experience of mine own dead, ſinful, loſt, and damnable Condition in Nature, and fully ſhewed me the Nothingneſs and Helpleſneſs of Creaturely Power, either without or within me, and graciouſly led me forth to witneſs with the Prophet *David*, That *he had drawn me forth of the horrible Pit, and ſet my Feet upon a Rock, and eſtabliſhed my Goings*; And then, and ever ſince, carried me forth ſometimes in much *Power*, ſometimes in *Weakneſs* (according to the working of his own Will) to declare unto the Sons of Men what he had *done for my Soul.*

Pſal. 40. 2.

This no ſooner appeared in me and others, whom it pleaſed the Lord *to reveal his Son in*, but the Power of *Babel* in the Miniſters of Satan, *transforming themſelves into Miniſters of Righteouſneſs*, then in the Epiſcopal and Prelatical Form, poured forth all their Malice

Gal. 1. 15, 16. 2 Cor. 11. 14, 15.

lice and Spite againſt the Truth, and againſt all thoſe in whom it appeared: Then throwing Dirt upon us, and hotly raging in Perſecution againſt us, in and under the Terms of *Puritans*, *Separatiſts*, *Grindletonians*, and *Antinomians*, &c. And alſo continued the ſame Bitterneſs in Malice, in the Tail of the Dragon (though then diſguiſed under the Name of *Presbyterians*, and a new Form of pretended Godlineſs) by the former odious Titles, and Addition of new, as *Libertines*, *Blaſphemers*, *Sectaries*, and *Hereticks*: And ſince hath not ceaſed under the new Devices of *Independency*, and *Church*-gathering, keeping ſtill the ſame Appellations, and ſuperadding of others, as *Dippers*, *Quakers*, and indeed what not? calling and accounting all others as Hereticks that were not of their Tribe and Trade, Form and

Judgment: And ſo the hireling Merchants of *Demetrius* his Craft do ſtill continue it. Yet, notwithſtanding all their bloody Malice, and inſatiable Envy, the Lord hath delivered me, and thoſe that were his, through his great Mercy, from the Paws of all theſe devouring Lions, and will ſtill faithfully keep and preſerve all his *by his mighty Power, through Faith unto Salvation.*

2 Cor. 1.10. 1 Pet. 1.5.

And now the Lord hath ſtrengthened my Spirit, and Hand to bear out my Witneſs againſt all theſe, and to manifeſt the ſame to you my dear Brethren, Partakers of the ſame *Heavenly Calling, and anointed with that Spirit that teacheth all things, and leadeth into all Truth*; where *there is neither Jew nor Greek, Bond nor Free, Male nor Female, but are all One in*

Gal. 3.28.

in Christ Jesus: To the Unity of whose Spirit he commends you, who remains,

April 28, 1663.

Yours in the Lord, though the lowest and least of all Saints.

Jo. Webster.

To

To all thoſe that ſet up Forms, and external Worſhip, inſtead of the ſpiritual, and thoſe that call themſelves the Miniſters of the Nation.

Country-men,

IT is far from my Purpoſe to aſperſe your Perſons, or to condemn any of the leaſt Appearances of the Lord Jeſus in you: Much leſs to oppoſe any thing that may tend

tend to the building up of the ſpiritual and new Jeruſalem. *Nevertheleſs the Lord hath put a few things in my Mouth, to ſpeak unto you, and ſome things in my Spirit to enquire of you, which I beſeech you to receive in Meekneſs, as becometh thoſe who have ſtiled themſelves by the dear and precious Name of Chriſtians.*

Hath the Spirit of Chriſt ever revealed in you, or the Record of his Truth taught you, that any Form of Godlineſs (how exact ſoever) or any external Worſhip, or Diſcipline (though never ſo near the Model, that you may imagine is laid down in the Letter of the Scriptures) doth make a Saint, where the Life and Power is altogether abſent? Or doth there appear, in any of your gathered Congregations, or ſelect Forms, the evident and pure Power of ſpiritual Self-denial, and divine Love? Nay, is it not as the Apoſtle fore-

foretells, having a Form of Godlineſs, but having denyed the Power thereof? *Doth Pride, Covetouſneſs, Cenſuring, Envying, Condemning, way, Murthering of others that follow not your Forms, declare or evidence the Power of Godlineſs? Is not he a Murtherer that* hateth his Brother, *and therefore* hath not eternal Life abiding in him? *Or is there none a Brother, but only he that is of your gathered Congregation? Is this to worſhip* the Father in Spirit and Truth? *Or rather*, to worſhip ye know not what, either at Jeruſalem, or upon ſome other Mountain? *The Lord open your Eyes, and give you Spirits to diſcern in what Principle ye ſtand: Was ever the Spirit of Chriſt in his Saints in any Age, a Spirit of Perſecution? Or were the Saints Accuſers of their Brethren, by caſting upon them any odious Titles? Or did they*

2 Tim. 3. 5.

1 John 3. 14, 15.

Joh. 4. 21, 22, 23, 24.

they complain of others to any ſe-
cular Power, or laboured to puniſh
or impriſon any that followed not
them and their Way? Nay, doth
Mark 9. 38, 39, 40. *not Chriſt teach them* not to
forbid ſuch? *And is it not the*
Rule, that Saints ſhould not
Jam. 4. 11, 12. ſpeak evil one of another? For
in ſo doing they judg the Law,
1 Cor. 4. 12. and fulfill it not? *And did not*
God lead out their Spirits, that
being reviled, they did bleſs;
being perſecuted, they did ſuf-
fer, and being defamed, they
Jude 9. did intreat? *Nay, is it fitting to*
bring a railing Accuſation againſt
the Devil? *No, but to refer it*
to the Lord, that he may rebuke
him. Now, whether it be ſo with
you or not, let your Conſciences
and Carriage ſpeak.

Did ever the Spirit of Chriſt
teach you, that any Actions, Du-
ties, Performances, or any holy
Exerciſes of yours, were well-plea-
ſing unto God, that were not the
Fruits

Fruits and Effects of his Spirit inhabiting and working in you? *No, although you ſhould* give your Bodies to be burned, and your Goods to feed the poor, *without the Principle of* Divine Love *(which is Chriſt) working the ſame in you, it would* profit you nothing. *Where is your Charity? Where is your Love? Doth all that you act in the Way of his Worſhip, flow from this Spirit? Try your ſelves,* Examine your ſelves, know you not that Chriſt Jeſus is in you, except you be Reprobates? *Muſt not* every Plant which the Heavenly Father hath not planted, be rooted out? *And if your Religion and Way of Worſhip were of God, it would ſtand without any Aſſiſtance of Man, or Worldly Power, that the* Gates of Hell could not prevail againſt it; *for* his Kingdom being not of this World, *is not upholden by the Pow-*

1 Cor. 13.3.

1 Cor. 3.5.

Mat. 15.13.

Mat. 16.18. Joh. 18.36.

Power or Principles of this World, but by the Almighty Word of his Spiritual Power.

But doth the Houſe of your Holineſs ſtand founded upon this Rock of Ages, or upon the Sandy Foundation of Man's Power, and Self-righteouſneſs, and there-

Mat. 7. 24, 25, 26, 27. *fore when* the Rain deſcendeth, the Winds blow, and the Floods beat, it falleth, and the Fall of it is great?

And you that call your ſelves the Miniſters of the Nation, did ever the Spirit of Chriſt teach you to derive your Calling and Miſſion from Man, or the Power of Men? Is it not the Lord of

Mat. 9. 36, 37, 38. *the* Harveſt only, *and none but he, by his own Will and Spirit,* that ſendeth forth Labourers into his Vineyard? *Had you your Miſſion from him, or from* Rome? *From his Spirit, or from the vain and fruitleſs Impoſition of the Hands of Biſhops or Presbyters, who a-*

piſhly

piſhly imitated the Apoſtles Action, without their Spirit, Gifts or Power? Is not the calling of a Miniſter (as was Paul's *) from God immediately, and* neither *of* Man, nor by Man? *Conſider into what Places you have thruſt your ſelves, even whither the Lord hath not put nor placed you: Nay, have you not run when he never ſent you? Thoſe that are his Diſciples,* chuſe not him, but he chuſeth them, and ordaineth them to bring forth Fruit. *But do you not pretend to chuſe him, to make a Trade of his Service, when you go and are ſent to Academies to be fitted for that End, and to Biſhops, Preſbyters, gathered Churches, or the Power of the Magiſtrate, to borrow Authority, and thereby to procure a fat Parſonage or Augmentation? And then you ſet up Shop to ſell and vend your Wares, as tho now you had ſerved a ſufficient*

Gal. 1. 11, 12.

Joh. 15. 16.

Apprentiſhip, and were Maſters of the Craft or Trade; when yet God hath neither choſen, fitted, nor ſent you forth in the Power and Demonſtration of his Spirit. And this appears by the Fruits of your pretended Miniſtry, being empty, dull, dead, liveleſs, and only like teaching of the Scribes and Phariſees: For indeed Men do not gather Grapes of Thorns, nor Figs of Thiſtles: *And ſo by the Fruits of their Doctrine, the true Miniſters are known from the falſe, and ſo are you.*

Mat. 7.6. 20.29.

Dare you preſume to aver, that you are Chriſt's Ambaſſadors, and know not the Meſſage that you ſhould deliver, but have it to frame, and hammer out by your Study, Cogitations, Devices, and the working of your carnal Wit, and corrupted Reaſon? Or to ſcrape and gather up out of this and that Author, Father, Schoolmen, Modern Writers, this and that Expoſitor,

positor, Commentator, and the like? Is this to be made able Ministers of the New Testament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit? *Those that Christ sends forth, have that* Unction that teacheth them all things, that they need not to ask or inquire of vain Idols that have Eyes and see not, Ears and hear not, Mouths and speak not, neither have any Spirit of Understanding in them at all, *but they are all taught of God, and have received in some Measure of that Spirit* which leads into all Truth, *and need not* take Thought what they shall answer; for it shall be given them in that Hour; for it is not they that speak, but the Spirit of the Father in them; and out of their Bellies do flow Fountains of Living Waters: *While in the mean time your* broken Cisterns *of Wit, Learning, and carnal Wisdom, can contain no Water. Can you be his Soldiers,*

2 Cor. 3.6. 1 Joh. 2.27. Heb. 8.11. Joh. 16.13. Mat. 10.19, 20. Joh. 7.38,39. Psal. 115. 5, 6, 7.

when you have no Weapons but what are carnal, and not those ſpiritu-
2 Cor. 10.4. *al ones of Chriſt, that are* migh-ty in him, to the pulling down of ſtrong Holds, and the lay-ing low of every Imagination that ſtands up againſt him, and his Power? *The Lord in Mer-cy open your Eyes, to ſee your own Emptineſs, and want of Furni-ture, to fight, conquer, and ſtand in this ſpiritual and great War-*
2 Cor. 3.5. *fare: Otherwiſe none are* ſuffici-ent of themſelves, to think any thing as of themſelvess but eve-ry Miniſter's Sufficiency is of God.

Did ever Chriſt teach you to preach for Hire, *or to make* Con-tracts *how much you muſt have for exerciſing* That *Miniſtry, the*
1 Cor. 9.16. Mic. 3.11. Neceſſity of which is laid upon you (*if you be called of God*) *even to Preach* in Seaſon and out of Seaſon, and wo be un-to them that do it not!

And

And yet it is your Cry, No publick Maintenance, no Miniſtry: Oh Hypocrites, how can ye eſcape the Damnation of Hell! *Or hath he taught you to remove from* Place to Place, *where you may have* more Money, *or a* greater Benefit? *This is only to preach for* Hire, *not for the Love of the Truth, nor out of your Senſibleneſs of the Neceſſity incumbent upon you. With what Faces can, or dare you exact* Tythes *or* Pay *from poor Labourers, by the compulſory Power of a worldly Law, who (perhaps) never received any Benefit from your Miniſtry? Or cry out for a publick Maintenance to be eſtabliſhed by the Magiſtrate? Is there any other Maintenance for a Goſpel-miniſtry, but what thoſe* freely *give, that feel, and confeſs the Benefit of the ſame; thinking it a ſmall Matter to give carnal things for ſpiritual? Did ever the Apoſtles compel (or declare it lawful*

ful ſo to do) *any to lay down the Price of their ſold Poſſeſſions at their Feet, but only received that, which, according to the Motion of every ones Spirit, was voluntarily brought in unto them? Or did they ever* Force *any* (*or declare it lawful ſo to do*) *to give them any carnal things, but ſuch as* Declared *that they had received ſpiritual things, and only ſo much as their Spirits were drawn out* Freely *to give?*

Act. 19. 24, 25, 25, 27, 28, 40. *But you, like* Demetrius, *and the reſt of the Silver-ſmiths of that Trade, have long ſhouted, and continue ſo ſtill, that* great is your *Diana* of Epheſus; *and that if this Truth I now hold forth, ſhould prevail, your* Shrine-making would be ſpoiled, *your Trade overthrown, and your ſelves utterly undone, who have nothing elſe to live by, and therefore by your Noiſe muſt needs provoke the Multitude, and* (*if poſſible*) *draw them on your Side, though*

though you be never able to give an Account of this your Unlawful Noiſe and Tumultuous Clamour. And I know you having ſo long time traded in this Merchandiſe, *and found therein* what your Souls lufted after, *cannot but* weep and mourn to ſee it all deſtroyed, and taken away: *And yet the Day is haſtening and the Time is at hand.* Rev. 18. 12, 13, 14.

The Lord therefore in the Tenderneſs of his Mercy, give you to ſee, that you are in *Babylon*, and call you out from thence, *that you be not Partakers of her Sins, and receive not of her Plagues*; and that you may be brought into the Church of Chriſt, which is his Body, to the eternal Rev. 18. 4.

nal Comfort of your Souls, and the Praise of his glorious Name,

April 28. 1653. *So prayeth the meanest of Men.*

J. W.

Di-

Divers Positions and Queries propounded unto all those, who being of different Judgments concerning the same, are willing, in Love and Meekness, to give or take Satisfaction.

1. *Of Humane Learning.*

BY Humane Learning I understand all that Science or Knowledge that is or may be acquired by Natural Power, Capacity and Industry: To the attaining of which, the immediate Concourse of God's Spirit is necessary, and the common Grace of the Holy Ghost, requisite for the making Men capable in divers Measures to *Position 1.*

attain the ſaid Acquirements; and this Concourſe or common Grace, I take with Man's Natural Power and Capacity, incluſively, and not diſjunctively. And thus is Science by the School-men divided into that which is acquired, and that which is infuſed; and this humane acquired Science I underſtand in the manner of Acquiſition, ſtands divided and diſtinguiſhed from that evidential and experimental Knowledge, which Men partake of, by the ſending in, inflowing, and indwelling of the Spirit of Chriſt. And in this Senſe the moſt knowing Men underſtand, and accept it.

Poſition 2. That all this Humane Learning, or acquired Knowledge in its Excellency and Perfection, cannot, *per ſe, & ex propriâ naturâ* underſtand, nor apprehend the Myſtery of the Goſpel; nor any way of its own Nature can be advantagious unto it; but is different from it, even hurtful and deſtructive unto the ſaid End, as may appear by theſe Arguments following.

The

The *Posse* of it is clearly denied; *The Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him: Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* A Natural Man cannot know them by any natural Power or Acquisition. But the Man of the most and greatest acquired Knowledge in the World is no more than a Natural Man: *For that which is born of the Flesh is but Flesh*, not Spirit. Therefore can he not understand the things of the Spirit of God; they are otherwise discovered, that is, spiritually, not carnally. *Argum.* 1. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Joh. 3. 6.

The *Esse* of it, or Matter of Fact is as clearly denied; *Which none of the Princes of this World knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Life.* And again; for *after that in the Wisdom of God, the World by Wisdom knew not God; it pleased God, by the Foolishness of preaching, to save those that believe.* So that neither the Princes of Learning, either of the *Jews* or *Gentiles*, did ever in their Wisdom or Learning know the Mind of God in the Gospel; nor we, or those that come *Argu.* 2. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

after us, do, or ſhall in all our Wiſdom ever know or underſtand it.

Argu. 3. That Humane or Worldly Wiſdom cannot know the Myſtery of the Goſpel, is clear, becauſe it is diſſonant from, and contrary to the Pleaſure and Decree of the Almighty, that it ſhould effect any ſuch End: *At that Time Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid, I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, becauſe thou haſt hidden theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes; even ſo Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.* For it is written, *I will deſtroy the Wiſdom of the wiſe, and will bring to nothing the Underſtanding of the prudent.* Now that which is diſſonant from, and contrary to the purpoſe of God, cannot *effect that which he hath determined it ſhall not.*

Mat. 11. 25, 26.

1 Cor. 1. 19, 20.

Argu. 4. This would neceſſarily ſet up (as it doth too much already) a Confidence in the Fleſh, and a glorying in Man's frail Wiſdom, and dark Cognition; which is contrary to that End which God hath decreed in the ſaving of Man. For *he hath choſen fooliſh things to confound wiſe, and weak things to confound ſtrong, and things*

1 Cor. 1. 27, 28, 29

things that are not, to confound things that are; that no Flesh should glory in his Presence. Therefore the Knowledge of the Divine Mysteries of the Gospel, comes not by Man's Acquisition, lest it should be said, *The Idol of his Learning had told him this.*

And as it doth not, nor can understand the Mysteries of the Gospel, but they seem Fooliſhneſs unto it; so all the Wisdom of the Flesh is at Enmity with, and destructive unto the Way of knowing the Truth, nay, even to the Truth it self; *Because the carnal Mind, or the Wisdom of the Flesh is Enmity against God, and is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.* So that every Mind naturally, though never so learned (for no Humane Learning sanctifyeth the Mind) is but a carnal Mind, and so is Enmity against God, and is not, nor can be subject to his Law; but is in Truth and Verity, *earthly, sensual* and *deviliſh.* *Argu.* 5. Rom. 7. 8. Jam. 3. 15.

And if it be objected, that though Humane Learning be an Enemy to the Law of God, while it is in a natural and unsanctifyed Heart: Yet when the Heart is once sanctifyed, *Object.* 1.

and truly turned to God, then it becomes a ſanctified Inſtrument, and a good Handmaid to Theology.

Solution. To this I anſwer, that though the Heart be truly ſanctifyed, in which Humane Learning doth inhere, as in its Subject; yet doth it not follow that Learning it ſelf is; no more than Sin can be ſaid to be ſanctified, though the Heart of a ſinful Man may be truly ſaid to be ſanctifyed: For acquired Learning by it ſelf, and of its own Nature is nothing elſe but Sin, and therefore remains ſo ſtill, and cannot truly and properly be ſaid to be ſanctified no more than Sin. But if by being ſanctifyed, they mean that the providential Wiſdom of God doth order it, or make uſe of it for the Good of his People, I oppoſe it not, ſo that it be underſtood, that that Good flows not from the Nature of acquired Knowledge it ſelf; but from the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Spirit of God, who maketh *all things work together for the Benefit of thoſe that love him, who are the called according to his Purpoſe*: And ſo no more can properly

Rom. 8.28.

ly in this reſpect be predicated of it, than of Sin it ſelf, which in that Caſe (though not as an Entity ; for *non entia, ad modum entium concipiuntur*) is ſaid alſo to work for the Good of God's Saints.

Again, if it be objected, that though Learning be not effectual to the underſtanding of the Myſtery of the Goſpel, yet it is prevalent to the compleating of the literal and hiſtorical Knowledge thereof. *Object.* 2.

To this I anſwer, Though it may conduce to the gaining of literal and hiſtorical Knowledge, yet this is not *ad idem*, becauſe it profiteth nothing ; for Truth it ſelf bears Record, *It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Fleſh profiteth nothing* ; and Men are made able *Miniſters of the New Teſtament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit ; for the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life.* So that all literal and hiſtorical Knowledge gained by Man's Power, is but like the Principle from whence it flowed, fleſhly, earthly, deadly, and deſtructive. *Solution.* Joh. 6. 63. 2 Cor. 3. 6.

Consectaries.

Consect. 1. Then all those that the World cries up for learned, from this Principle of Humane Learning, are but with God called and accounted undiscipled, untaught, as *Peter* witnesseth clearly, where speaking of the Epistles of *Paul*, he saith, in
2 Pet. 3. 16. them *some things were hard to be understood, which they that are untaught and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own Destruction.* Whereby it is manifest, that by the Word ἀμαθεῖς (which though usually rendred in the *English* Translation heedlesly, *the unlearned*, yet properly signifies, *the undiscipled* or *untaught*, and therefore commonly in the Latine is turned *indocti*, which points forth the same significantly; for the Word that signifyeth unlearned, or unletter'd is ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται,
Acts 4. 13. which is, *Homines illiterati, & idiotæ.*) He intends those that were undiscipled, and had not the teaching of the Spirit, and yet in the Strength of natural Reason and carnal Wisdom, wrest the Word to their

their own Deſtruction. So that all that Knowledge which flows from the natural Man's Acpuiſition, which the World calls Wiſdom, is *Fooliſhneſs with God*, and though the Wiſdom of God, which ſtands only in the teaching of his Spirit, be accounted Fooliſhneſs with Men, yet *this Fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than the Wiſdom of Men.* 1 Cor. 1.25.

Then all thoſe Expoſitions and Interpretations of Scripture that have been, are, or ſhall be made by the Force and Power of Humane Learning, and Man's innate Notions of Wit and Reaſon, are no more than earthly, ſenſual, and deviliſh, deſtroying all thoſe that rely upon them, or truſt in them. And all preaching, or expounding from this Principle, is damnable both to Speaker and Hearer: *If the blind lead the blind, they fall both into the Ditch.* Then are not the moſt that pretend to preach, ſeeing they do it but from this Principle, thoſe that *take away the Key of Knowledge, and enter not themſelves, neither ſuffer thoſe that would come in to enter?* And therefore a moſt heavy Woe belongs un- *Conſ.* 2. Mat. 15.14. Mat. 23.13.

unto them, and will fall upon them.

Therefore when Men teach and affirm, that without humane Learning, none can be able Miniſters of the New Teſtament, and condemn thoſe that ſpeak only out of the teaching of the Spirit, and have little or no humane Learning at all, and make uſe of little or none, but lay it aſide, do they not plainly *ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven from Men*, and neither enter themſelves, nor ſuffer others that would?

Conſ. 3. Then, if the Quinteſſence of all humane Learning were as a Magiſterial Extract, monopoliz'd in one Man, yet were it no fit Qualification for a Miniſter of the Goſpel; *for*

Mat. 16.17. *Fleſh and Blood revealeth not thoſe divine things unto Men, but the Father which is in Heaven.*

Queries.

Query 1. Whether of two Men, the one having a great Meaſure of acquired Learning, but not the infuſed and experimental; the other the infuſed and experimental, but no humane Learning, are fitter to be choſen to the Miniſtry? Whe-

Whether any be fit or able to judg of the Spirit in another, that have it not themſelves, or to give Approbation, or Witneſs to others, of that which they have not experienced in themſelves, and conſequently whether a Nation or Commonwealth can juſtly ſet up Perſons to judg of the Spirit of God in others, and to give them Licences to exerciſe thoſe Gifts of the Spirit, and have not experienced the Work of this Spirit in themſelves or not? *Query* 2.

Whether or not all that much-magnified natural Reaſon (which we think dignifieth us above, and diſtinguiſheth us from Brutes) and all that human Learning (which we conceive exalts and rectifieth Reaſon) be the Fruit and Effect of the forbidden Tree, and is a ſpurious and adventitious Faculty, which Man wanted in his Innocency, and was inſtilled into him by *Satan* in the Fall? *Query* 3.

Whether all that Knowledge that a natural Man hath by Nature, and from the firſt *Adam*, & all that which by the ſame Power he can attain, be not the ſame helliſh and ſerpentine *Query* 4.

Wiſ-

Wiſdom, by which the Devil ruleth his Kingdom or not? And whether all the horrible and ſtrange Tenets ſprung up in all Ages, with the Jars and Diſputes about the things of God, ariſe not from the Smoak of the bottomleſs Pit of *Satan*'s Malice, ſtirred up in the Region of Man's carnal Wiſdom, and humane Learning?

Of the calling and enabling of Miniſters.

Poſition 1. That Chriſt, by his Spirit, manifeſteth the Myſtery of the Goſpel unto ſuch as in his own Purpoſe and Decree he hath ſeparated for the Miniſtry, and ſends them forth in the Power and Evidence of the ſame Spirit; and all that Men have done in appointing and ſetting up of a Miniſtry, is of Man and not of God: Only thoſe that have had Experience of the ſame Truth, have ſometimes uſed to give their Evidence, or witneſs to the Truth in others, which was not their Calling, but a Teſtimony from others, that ſuch were already called. And no human Power hath any legal Right to forbid

bid or hinder that ſuch may not ſpeak what God hath revealed in them, and unto them.

It is plain, that God chooſeth Inſtruments, and they not him: *Ye have not choſen me, but I have choſen you, and ordained you, that you ſhould go, and bring forth Fruit.* And it is he that ſets them apart for the Miniſtry, and not Man, as the Apoſtle witneſſeth; *but when it pleaſed God, who ſeparated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen, immediately I conferred not with Fleſh and Blood; Neither went I up to* Jeruſalem, *to them that were Apoſtles before me.* No, he was *an Apoſtle, not of Man, nor by Man, but by Jeſus Chriſt, neither was he taught it but by the Revelation of his Spirit*; and ſo are all thoſe that are truly called of God; for there is nothing but Chriſt by his Spirit only that maketh Men *able Miniſters of the New Teſtament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit*; for Men as Men, *are not ſufficient to think any thing of themſelves, but their Sufficiency is of God. For though there be Diverſities of Gifts, yet it is*

Argu. 1. Joh. 15.16.

Gal. 1. 15, 16, 17.

Gal. 1. 11, 12.

2 Cor. 3. 5, 6.

1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6, 11.

is the same Spirit that gives them; and *though there be Differences of Administrations, yet it is but the same Lord* that doth administer in them all; and though there be *Diversity of Operations, yet it is the same God that worketh all in all*, and one Spirit that giveth out all these as it pleaseth.

Arg. 2. And as he calleth them, enableth them and seteth them apart, so he only sendeth them forth, and the Authority they have is only from him, not from Man: For in the same Manner that he was sent (which was in the Power of the Father, and not in nor from the Power of Man) so sent

Mat. 9.38. he them: And therefore saith, *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that he would send forth Labourers into his Vineyard*. It was not to pray Princes nor Magistrates, Bishops, nor Presbyters, Itenerants, nor congregated Churches, to send forth Labourers, but the Lord of the Harvest only. Unless we would falsly imagine, that the Lord of the Harvest (that hath or-

Mat. 13. 30, dained the *Wheat to be gathered into his*
37. *own Barn*, and is that dear, loving, and provident Father, that taketh Care for all his; nay, *though a Mo-*

ther

ther may forget her Child, yet will he not forget his) should take no care of the sowing, planting, watering, nor increase of his spiritual and immortal Seed, nor of the reaping of that Harvest which was not purchased *with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of his dear Son*: But leave it to ignorant, careless, or malicious Husbandmen. It is he that is the Begetter and Sower of this Spiritual Seed, the Planter, Waterer, and Increaser of it. For *neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth any thing, but God that giveth the Increase.*

2 Pet. 5.7. Isa. 49. 15.

1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.

1 Cor. 3.7.

And as they are sent forth by Him, and his Spirit only, so their Authority and Weapons are *Spiritual*, not Carnal or Humane, they speak in the power, evidence and demonstration of the Spirit, and with *authority, not like Scribes and Pharisees*; for the weapons of their Warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God: Their Power ariseth not from Commissions and Licences given or granted from Magistrates, Parliaments, or numbers of Persons, proudly, and *Lucifer*-like, stiled *Divines*, from

Argu. 3.

1 Thess. 1.3.

Mat. 7. 29.

from Committees or Colleges, Presbyteries or Academies, nor from any such, but from the Lord of Hosts, the God of Heaven and Earth, from Jesus Christ the Judge of Quick and Dead, and from that Spirit of his that *searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God.* The strength and might of their Weapons is not Academick and Scholastical Learning (the rotten rubbish of Ethnical and Babylonish Ruins) nor Fathers, Modern Writers, Expositors, Commentators (the airy Bubbles that Ignorance, Corrupt Custom, and Humane Tradition hath blown up, and guilded over with the unsuitable and Heterogeneous Title of Orthodoxal Authors) nor their Wit, Reason, nor Collected Notes (the rotten Crutches to support Lameness) no nor any of these, or whatsoever can arise from the Flesh, but only that Spirit of Truth, *that leads into all Truth.*

Argu. 4. And as their Calling and Power is only from God, so Man hath no Power to obstruct or hinder it; for *Peter* and *John* said unto the Councel of the Jews, *Whether it be right in the*

the ſight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but ſpeak the things that we have ſeen and heard. Acts 4.19,20

If it be objected, that though it be true, that God called many of the Apoſtles by his own Power and Spirit only; yet that Calling was immediate and extraordinary; and afterwards thoſe that were ſo called, did conſtitute and ordain others in an ordinary way, by impoſition or extenſion of Hands, as divers places of Scripture do affirm: *For this cauſe left I thee in* Crete, *that thou ſhouldſt ſet in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.* Titus 1. 5. *And neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Propheſie, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery.* 1 Tim. 4. 14. *And when they had laid their hands on them, and faſted, and prayed, they ſent them away.* Acts 13. 3. And *when they had ordained them Elders in every Church, and had prayed with faſting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.* Acts 14. 23. *Obj.* 1.

For thoſe diſtinctions of *Mediate* and *Immediate*, *Ordinary* and *Extraordinary*, I find no mention of them, *Solution. Argu.* 1.

nor ground for them in the Gospel, and they are but the cunning and subtile Devices of the Schools, and therefore need no further answer, than rejection and denial, until they be made good from a better ground than that fruitless and vain Wisdom of Man. And though in the calling of many of his Ministers in divers Ages, there were divers Circumstances used at the calling of some, that were varied or omitted at the calling of others (which they have therefore made an Essential Difference; not knowing that Circumstantials do not absolutely change the nature of Essentials) yet was it the same God that called and sent them, and the same Spirit that inabled them, and spoke in them, as saith the Record of Truth, *God who at* Heb. 1. 1,2. *sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.* So many of the Apostles were called by the external and audible Voice of Christ in the Flesh; yet that verbal Call had signified little, if the Spirit had not called them inwardly in their Hearts;

Hearts; for herein consisteth their Calling, that *To them it was given to understand the Mystery of the Kingdom, but to others it was not given*: And yet were many others as truly called as they, that never saw nor heard Christ speak in the Flesh. And *Paul* being called, had a *great Light shined*, and *a Voice spake unto him*, which those that journeyed with him, could hear, though they *saw no Man*; and and yet were *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Barnabas*, and others as truly called as he, in and by the Power of the same Spirit, though not in the same manner, relating to Circumstances: And yet did, and do all the Ministers of Christ in all Ages speak from the same Principle, and are sent forth in the same Power and Spirit; so that Circumstance makes not substantial Difference, and so that part of the Objection of no force: For the Truth saith, *Knowing this first, that no Prophesie of the Scripture is of any private Interpretation. For the Prophesie came not in old time by the Will of Man; but Holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*: And so do all his Ministers still,

Mat. 13.11.

Acts 9. 3, 4, 7.

2 Pet. 1. 20, 21.

until the end of the World.

Argu. 2. For the Impoſition of Hands, it is
Luke 5. 13. Mark 1. 41. manifeſt, that it was uſed in divers
Acts 3. 7. Acts 5. 12. caſes; as firſt by our Saviour, in
Mat. 19. 13, 14, 15. curing of Diſeaſes, and after, by
Acts 13. 3. Acts 19. 6. the Apoſtles in the like caſes: And likewiſe upon little Children brought unto him.

And laſtly, by the Apoſtles and Presbyteries, in laying on of their Hands, with Faſting and Prayer: But it is as manifeſt, that by their laying on of Hands, Faſting and Praying, Gifts of Grace, χαρίσματα were given, and thoſe upon whom they laid their Hands, and Prayed with, did thereupon ſpeak with Tongues, and Propheſie, and ſo thereby received the Holy Ghoſt, and this was that Gift that *Timothy*
1 Tim. 4. 14. Acts 8. 19. was exhorted *not to neglect*; and this was it that *Simon Magus* would have bought with Mony. Now to imitate an Ordinance, or practiſe an Adminiſtation, without the ſame Power, Spirit and Gifts, is but Hypocritical and Vain: Therefore unleſs that they that pretend to ordain by Impoſition of Hands, had the ſame Power, or thereby could con-

fer

fer the ſame Gifts, they ought not to practiſe the ſame Adminiſtration, becauſe without the preſence of the ſame Power, and operation of the ſame Gifts, wherein the Eſſence of it ſtood, it cannot be ſaid to be an Ordinance of God, but a Tradition of Men.

Argu. 3. Again, the falling of the Holy Ghoſt, and the manifeſting of its viſible Power, or Power viſibly, by Prophecying, and ſpeaking with Tongues; was not (as hath been commonly miſtaken) a peculiar Ordinance for ſetting Men apart for the Miniſtry; but was commonly uſed to Converts, as Converts, and belonged to Believers as they were ſuch. Which is undeniably manifeſt: For *when* Philip *came to* Samaria, *and had preached the Goſpel, many there believed, and were baptized, both Men and Women: And* Peter *and* John *were ſent down unto them, who prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghoſt (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: Only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jeſus.) Then laid they their Hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghoſt:* And theſe

Acts 8. 12, 14, 15, 16, 17.

were both Men and Women, and not all Miniſters, unleſs every Believer be one.

And again, when *Paul* came to *Epheſus*, he found there certain Diſciples that had been baptized with the Baptiſm of *John*, but had *not heard whether there were any Holy Ghoſt or not*, and theſe he *baptized* again *in the Name of the Lord Jeſus*, And *when he had laid his Hands upon them, the Holy Ghoſt came on them, and they ſpake with Tongues, and propheſied. And all theſe were about twelve.* But it is not apparent that this was done for ordaining them for the Miniſtry, but as they were Believers, unleſs where the Scripture is ſilent, we muſt give it a Tongue to ſpeak out what we fanſie and ſuppoſe. And therefore *Timotheus ſtirring up the Gift* that he had received by *Paul's Hands*, and *the Hands of the Elderſhip*, was but that Gift of the Holy Ghoſt which he received as a Convert, not as a Miniſter, unleſs (as I ſaid) all Believers be Miniſters, as in ſome Degree they are in Truth and Verity. For God hath not given his the *Spirit of Fear, but of Power, of Love,* and

Act. 19. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7.

2 Tim. 1. 6, 7.

and *of a ſound Mind.* And indeed there are two things concerning this very obſervable. 1. That the Holy Ghoſt often fell upon thoſe that were converted, while the Word was in ſpeaking; ſometimes before they were baptized with Water, and ſometimes before praying with them, or laying on of Hands; and yet theſe they uſually baptized with Water afterwards as is manifeſt: That *at Pentecoſt they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpoke with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them Utterance.* And *while* Peter *yet ſpake theſe Words, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all them which heard the Word.* 2. Thoſe upon whom the Holy was thus faln, we find that they did baptize them, but not lay their Hands on them; but thoſe that had been baptized, and not received this Gift, upon ſuch they put their Hands, that they might receive it. By which it is clearly manifeſt, that Impoſition of Hands was uſed to many that were baptized, who had not received the Gift, and ſo was common to Believers, as Believers, as *Peter* witneſſeth, ſaying, *As I began to ſpeak, the Holy Ghoſt fell on them, as on us at*

Act. 2. 4.

Act. 10. 44.

Act. 8. 12, 14, 15.

Act. 19. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7.

Act. 11.15, 16, 17. *the Beginning. Then remembred I the Word of the Lord, how that he said,* John *indeed baptized with Water: But ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like Gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; What was I that I could withstand God?* So that here it is clear, that this Gift (and so the Type or Ordinance of Imposition of Hands,) did belong to as many as believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and so was not peculiar to the Ministry only.

Argu. 4. And as to that Scripture, *Acts* 13. where it is said, *and when they had fasted, and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away*, v. 3. and so urge that this Imposition of Hands was then used for the setting of *Barnabas* and *Saul* apart for the Ministry, and so was their Calling or Ordination thereunto. 1. It is manifest that these Men were called before, and did exercise the Ministry before; and therefore in the same Place they are called Prophets, and and Teachers, προφῆται καὶ διδάσκαλοι; which they could not truly have been said to be, unless they had been be-

before called, and ordained of God. Act. 9. 20, 29.
2. When the Holy Ghost desired to have them separated, they were then ministring unto the Lord, and fasting; so that they were called to, and exercised in the Work before this their separating; for *Paul* preached presently after his Conversion, at *Damascus*, and also at *Jerusalem*; and it was three Years after his Conversion before he came thither; so that this laying on of Hands was not (as is commonly alledged) his calling or setting apart to the Ministry. Gal. 1. 18, 22, 23.
3. This separating or sending forth of *Saul*, and *Barnabas*, was for the accomplishing of that Work whereunto he had already called them; and so to imploy them in several Places or Countries: And when they were to take this Journey, the rest of the Brethren did fast and pray with them, and laid their Hands on them, that the Lord might strengthen them, and prosper them in the Work. Which thing ought to be done, and is usually practised by Saints when God sends forth any Minister to other Places or Regions to Preach his Word.

And

Argu. 5. And also as to that Scripture alledged in *Act.* 14. v. 23. Where the Words are χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους : *Quumque ipsis per creassent Presbyteros : And when they ordained them Elders.* Where some say is understood, Ordination, and setting apart to the Ministry: Others, the chooſing of Ministers for particular Places, by Consent of the People in extending the Hand. 1. The Apostles no where mention any Power or Skill that
2 Cor. 3. 5, 6. they had to call, or *make Men able Ministers of the New Testament*, but do witness, that it is God that makes them, and others so, and he
Mat. 9. 38. only *sends them into his Vineyard*, and not Men: And therefore the Apostles Practice cannot be understood to contradict their Evidence in teaching; and therefore this cannot be understood of Ordaining and Calling of Men to the Ministry; but of appointing Men to particular Places, for Order and Conveniency Sake, that were already called, and ordained of God. 2. *Paul* oftentimes gives out his Witness, and Commendation of particular Men, testifying that God had gifted, called,

led, and made them faithful for that Work of the Miniſtry, and ſo ſends them to divers Places to abide as Miniſters: So he doth of *Timothy*, *Titus*, and many others: *Now if* Timotheus *come, ſee that he may be with you without Fear: For he worketh the Work of the Lord, as I alſo do. Whether any do enquire of* Titus, *he is my Partner, and fellow Helper concerning you: Or our Brethren, they are the Meſſengers of the Churches, and the Glory of Chriſt.* And ſo he gives his Witneſs of *Tychicus*, that *he is a beloved Brother, and a faithful Miniſter in the Lord:* and *he* teſtifies that he *ſent* Timotheus *to the* Theſſalonians *as a Miniſter of God, and a fellow Labourer in the Goſpel, to eſtabliſh them, and comfort them concerning their Faith.* So that what was done of the Apoſtles, Presbyteries, or Churches, was but only a giving forth of their Witneſs in behalf of ſuch as God had called, that by their Teſtimony others might more willingly receive them and their Doctrine. 3. When *Timothy* was left at *Epheſus*, and *Titus* in *Crete* to ſet things in Order, and ordain Elders in particular Places, this was but to ap-

Rom.16.21. 1Cor.16.10. 2Cor.8.23. Epheſ.6.21. Col.4.7. 1 Theſ.3.2.

appoint such as God had already called and gifted to remain at such particular Places, and to give their Testimony and Witness that they were so called; which either they did by extending of the Hand, when divers so called and gifted were present or nominated; or else that divers being proposed, the Believers of that Church did by extending the Hand, manifest which of them they desired to be over them in the Lord: And then these they confirmed in those Places, and prayed that God might
Act. 20. 28. prosper them in that Work, *To feed the Flock of Christ, which he hath purchased with his own Blood:* And these
1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. are the Pastors *That should feed the Flock, not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind: And not as being Lords over the Heritages.* Not but that they are called before this, and this but a Witness from others that they are so called.

Arg. 6. If it were in the Power of Magistrates, Academies, Presbyteries, or Churches to send forth Ministers, then this would be a continual, and standing Power to propagate this Tribe, by a way of carnal Generation

on, as that of the *Levites*, who were born Prieſts, or to the Right of the Prieſthood: And ſo no Age or Generation need be without, as hath been, and is practiſed in the Kingdom of *Babylon* to this Day, who all claim it by Succeſſion, and a carnal Way of Propagation; Biſhops from the Pope, Presbyters from them, and the Independents and baptized Churches from the Presbyters: So that here would be a perpetual Miniſtry ſet up by Man, whether ever God ſent any or not. When the *Myſtery* of his Truth *hath been hidden from Ages and Generations, and is only manifeſt to the Saints* according to the *Times and Seaſons that the Father hath put in his own Power*. And ſo all along the Time of the Apoſtaſie *theſe Locuſts have ſwarmed out of the bottomleſs Pit, and covered the Face of the Earth to devour the Fruits thereof* (and would continue ſo ſtill) though the Father of Light never ſent them, but the Prince of Darkneſs.

Col. 1. 26.

Act. 1. 7.

Rev. 9. 3, 10.

Con-

Conſectaries.

Conſ. 1. Then for a State or Commonwealth to ſet up, and appoint a National Miniſtry, from any Judgment of Men, Miniſters, or Churches: Is to take unto themſelves the Power, Wiſdom, and Right of the Almighty, and to ſet themſelves in his Throne, and ſo to be like the

Joh. 10. 1, 2, 6, 10. *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, *Thieves and Robbers*, ſtealing, and attributing that Honour unto themſelves, which is due to the *Lord of the Harveſt*, who only *ſendeth forth Labourers into his Vineyard*. This is but to ſet up a carnal Image of a Miniſtry, a Picture without Life, a Huſk and Shell without Kernel, a Form without Life, and Pow-

Pſal. 2. 10, 11, 12. er, nay, no leſs than a *Babyloniſh*, Helliſh, and Satanical Miniſtry, *For every Plant that he planteth not, muſt be rooted out; and he that gathereth not with him, ſcattereth abroad. Be wiſe now therefore, O ye Kings, be inſtructed ye Judges of the Earth. Serve the Lord with Fear, rejoyce with trembling. Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the Way, when his Wrath is kindled but*

a little: Bleſſed are all they that put their Truſt in him.

Then thoſe that have *entred into the Sheep-fold not by the Door, but climbed up ſome other Way, the ſame are Thieves and Robbers; and the Sheep neither know, nor hear their Voice, nor follow them*: And he that cannot evidence his Calling to be immediately from and by the Spirit of Chriſt, both by the Witneſs of the ſame Spirit in his own Breaſt, the Power, and Authority of the Speakings of God in him, and by the Seal of his Miniſtry, the Converſion, and Confirmation of Souls; is nothing elſe but a *Thief and a Robber*, a Deceiver, and an *Hireling*, and never was ſent of God, but came of himſelf, and had no Miſſion but from the Devil, and Man. *Conſ.* 2. Joh. 10.1,2, 3,6,10,11.

Then are all Licences, and Commiſſions from Men to authorize others to preach, and teach, vain, corrupt, and abominable, and Men that pretend to derive their Power from theſe, are no leſs than Miniſters of Satan, and Fire-brands of Hell, and *by their Fruits ye may know them*: Theſe preach War and Blood, Strife and Debate, carnal things, *Conſ.* 3.

not

not ſpiritual, earthly, not heavenly, and love *the Wages of Unrighteouſneſs, and periſh in the gainſaying of Core.* Therefore as Man can give no Power in the things of Chriſt, he ought not to hinder any; let Men *take heed leſt they be found Fighters againſt God*, and leave his Cauſe to himſelf, for what he ſets up muſt ſtand: And if any thing be not of him, it will fall of it ſelf; for that which is crooked cannot be made ſtraight.

Jud. 11.

Act. 5. 38, 39.

Queries.

Query 1. I deſire to know from whence the National Miniſters have their Calling, or Ordination? If from Man, who gave him that Power, and wherein conſiſts it? If from God, when, and how did they receive it, and wherein ſtands the Power of it?

Query 2. Are not they Thieves and Robbers, that ſteal and rob Chriſt of his Honour? And do not theſe ſo, when they hold that being bred in an Academy, and furniſhed with ſuch Arts and Learning as are taught there, and to be ordained by Biſhops, Pres-

Presbyters, or Churches, is the true Calling, and Ordination of Miniſters? If this be not to rob God of his Honour, what is it then?

Do theſe that call themſelves the Miniſters of the Nation, ſeek Authority, Counſel, Countenance, and Protection from God only (that ſends forth true Miniſters, and bids them *not be afraid of thoſe that can kill the Body, and can do no more; but of him that can throw both Body and Soul into Hell Fire*) or from Men and Magiſtrates? *Query* 3.

Why do theſe Men, if they be ordained of God, and ſent out in the Power of his Spirit, perſecute, condemn, and ſcandalize others, for witneſſing that there is no other Calling but what is in the Power of that Spirit? When it is certain, *That no Man ſpeaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jeſus accurſed.* 1 Cor. 12. 3.

Of the Wages and Maintenance of Miniſters.

That the Miniſters of the Goſpel have allotted and allowed them a *Poſition* 1.

Maintenance, by the Goſpel Order, is evident.

Argu. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 6, 7, 8, 9, 14. Becauſe *The Labourer is worthy of his Hire, and the Lord hath ordained that they which Preach the Goſpel ſhould Live of the Goſpel: And he that is taught in his Word, ſhould communicate to him that teacheth in all good things, Gal. 6. 6.*

Poſit. 2. But it is as evident, that this Maintenance ariſeth not from Tithes and Oblations, as to the *Levites* under the *Jewiſh* Miniſtry: Nor by the Power of a compulſory Law made by a Common-wealth, or National Power, in giving or ſetling a National Maintenance: But from the free Gift, and Contribution of thoſe individual Perſons wrought upon by that Man's Miniſtry, to whom they are to communicate their temporal things, and the Proportion ſuch as God ſhall move their Spirits to beſtow.

Argu. 1. Heb. 4. 14. Becauſe the *Jewiſh* Miniſtry is now fulfilled, and ended, which was but the Pattern of the Spiritual, and now we have no other *High Prieſt* but *Chriſt*; and all his People being Members of his myſtical Body, *and*

Stones

Stones in his Spiritual Building, do not pay Tithes in him *who received them of* Abraham, *in whose Loyns (according to the Flesh)* Aaron *and his Sons were*: And *therefore the Priest-hood being changed, there is made of necessity a Change also of the Law.* Heb. 7. 6, 9, 12.

Secondly, our Saviour's Command to his Disciples when he sent them into the World, was not that they should have Lands, and Livings, Lordships and Dominion, Tithes and Augmentations, but only *Food and Rayment*, and *therewithall they were to be content.* And they were *to provide neither Gold nor Silver, nor Brass in their Purses, nor Scrip for their Journey, neither two Coats, neither Shoes, nor yet Staves (for the Workman is worthy of his Meat)* so that they were to bargain or contract for none, but only to receive that thankfully of those whose Hearts God stirred up to give it freely. *Argu.* 2. Mat. 10. 9, 10

Thirdly, when our Saviour was ascended, and the Spirit was descended upon the Apostles and other Believers, they did not force nor compel those that were converted to give them so much or so much out of *Argu.* 3.

their Estates, but those that freely would *sold them, and laid the Mony down at their Feet, and then Distribution was made according as every Man had need*; and while their Goods were unsold, or not brought into the common Purse, they might every one have done *with their own as they listed*, as the Apostle told *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; so that they witnessed that they had no other Warrant to receive Wages by, but only what was freely given unto them.

Act. 4. 34, 35, 36, 37.

Acts 5. 4.

Argu. 4. Fourthly, this Rule was not so strict neither, that a Minister of necessity must receive it, or else offend against the Rule; but it was so indifferent that *Paul* did refuse it in the Coasts of *Achaia*, and said, that *none should rob him of that boasting* in those Quarters, and adds the Reasons why he did so, which was *not that it was not lawful for him to have taken what they freely offered* (as it seems he did in some other Places) *but that he might cut off Occasion from those which desired Occasion, that wherein they gloried, they might be found even as he; and that he might make the Gospel of Christ without Charge; for the Necessity of preach-*

2 Cor. 11. 9, 10, 11, 12.

1 Cor. 9. 15, 16, 17, 18.

preaching it was laid upon him (as it is upon all those that are truly sent) and therefore whether he received any thing or nothing, a *wo* belonged unto him *if he did not preach the Gospel.*

If it be objected, that in those Days the Magistates were Heathen, and so took no Care for those that were Christians; yet now in our Nation the Magistrates are Christians, and therefore ought, and may make Laws, and appoint Wages and Maintenance for their Ministers. *Obj.* 1.

I answer, if Suppositions were Apodictical Proofs, then many would make ready Conclusions, and the way to Knowledge would be very facile; for it is easie to suppose that all the Magistrates in a Commonwealth inferiour and superiour are all Christians, nay the whole Body of the Nation it self, because they have a National Worship, and are all promiscuously called by that glorious Name; but there is a vast Difference betwixt Names and Things being so, and being called so: It is one thing to suppose, and another to prove; and but weak from the *Solution. Arg.* 1.

Denotation to argue to the thing; as though *Judas* might truly be concluded one of the true Disciples of Christ, because he is called *one of the twelve*. No; external Forms do not demonstratively prove the Verity of internal Principles; For *he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, neither is that Circumcision that is outward in the Flesh: But he is a Jew that is one inwardly, and Circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose Praise is not of Men, but of God.* Therefore when the Supposition is proved, then it may be answered; in the mean time *ex suppositis, suppositio sequitur.*

Rom. 2. 28, 29.

Again, if some of the Magistrates were truly Christians, yet *Christ's Kingdom being not of this World*, but a Spiritual one, they ought not to intermeddle with carnal Constitutions in his Spiritual things, which he makes good by his own Spirit, Wisdom and Providence, and not by the Counsel or *Wisdom of the Princes of this World, which comes to nought*; and his Servants are to wait upon him by a simple believing, and to *walk by Faith, and not by sight*: Moreover, if they

Argu. 2. Joh. 18. 36.

Mat. 6. 32. 2 Cor. 5. 7.

they were Believers, they might every one of them in his ſingle Condition give to him that taught him what Proportion of his own good things he had an Heart to beſtow, but not to ſet down a Law to judge over the Conſcience of his Brother, becauſe theſe things ought to be done out of a Principle of Love, and not from the Law of an external Command.

If they were all Chriſtians, it was never yet that I could ſee proved, that they had Power to ſettle a Maintenance for the Miniſtry of the Goſpel: And the contrary to me appears an undeniable Truth, and that from theſe Grounds. *Argu.* 3.

1. Becauſe the Rule of Chriſt, and the Practice of his Apoſtles, were only for a free and voluntary Contribution from the free-will offering of thoſe whoſe Spirits were wrought upon by that particular Miniſtry to which they ſhould contribute: Now for Chriſtians to pretend to have Power to make a Law for the Maintenace of his Miniſtry, and the Good of his Cauſe, and walk contrary to the Rule of Chriſt himſelf,

self, to me seems strange that it should be accounted lawful.

2. There is no Magistrate hath any Power to make a Law of those things he perfectly understands not; for how can a right Judgment be given where the Intellect is not clearly informed? Now it nowhere appears that the Magistrates have the Spirit of discerning to know the Ministers of Christ infallibly from the Ministers of *Satan*; and therefore might as soon maintain and advantage the one as the other.

3. As was said before, it crosseth the Way of providential Confidence and simple believing, and waiting upon God; and so cannot be lawful for them to do.

Consectaries.

Consect. 1. Therefore for a Magistracy, by a compulsory Law, to settle a Maintenance for a National Ministry by Tithes, Augmentations, or in any other Way, is to act against the Ordinance of Christ, and to *make the Commandments of God of none Effect by the Traditions of Men.* And therefore they

Mat. 15. 3.

they ſhould learn to *give unto Cæſar the things that are Cæſar's, and to God the things that are God's.* Mat. 22.21.

Then for Miniſters to be bred at the Academies, and get Orders, Licences or Seals from humane Authority, thereby to get fat Benefices and rich Livings, is to make the Miniſtry a meer Trade, and to go contrary to the Command of Chriſt, and the Practice of the Apoſtles. To make Bargains with the People to have ſo much, and ſo much, for exerciſing their Miniſtry, is to preach for Pay and not for Chriſt: To preſs the Magiſtracy to provide for them, is to diſtruſt the Promiſe and Providence of God, and to flee to *the Arm of Fleſh*, and therefore they are doubly accurſed, both for making *the Arm of Fleſh their Refuge, and withdrawing their Hearts away from the living God*; *Hear ye this, I pray you, ye Heads of the Houſe of Jacob and Princes of the Houſe of Iſrael, that abhor Judgment and pervert all Equity: They build up* Zion *with Blood*, and *Jeruſalem with Iniquity. The Heads thereof judge for Reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for Hire, and the Pro-*

Conſ. 2.

Jer. 17.5.

Micah 3.9, 10,11.

Prophets thereof devine for Money: Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us. And when the Ministers preach and cry out, if Tithes be taken away, and Augmentations cease, and there be no Wages nor Maintenance allowed by Law, how should we live? What shall maintain our Families? Who will then preach the Gospel? The People are hard-hearted, and will give us little or nothing; if no publick Maintenance, no Gospel. Are not all these the Complaints of *an evil, adulterous,* and *unbelieving Generation,* that preach Faith to others, even of things high and spiritual, and yet themselves dare not trust God for
Mat. 6. 32. Food and Rayment? *Do not the Heathen seek after all these things,* and have you no more Faith than they?

Conf. 3. Then those that are the true Ministers of Christ, know that the necessity of preaching the Gospel is laid upon them, and will preach in season and out of Season, whether they have any thing or nothing; nay will not, cannot in Conscience take any thing carnal from any Man, to whom

whom they have not ſown ſpiritual; and not that neither, but according to the free-will offering of their Minds, to whom they have miniſtred Spiritual things; and in this Point *by their Fruits ye ſhall know them.*

Queries.

Didſt thou, who calleſt thy ſelf one of Chriſt's Miniſters, when Chriſt called thee, and ſent thee forth (if ever he did ſo) make a Bargain with him what thou ſhouldſt have for thy Labour, without which thou wouldſt not do thy Work, or but negligently and with murmuring? *Query* 1.

Did ever Chriſt teach thee to clamour and cry to the Magiſtrate to ſettle thee ſome Maintenance by a Law? Or to exact it from the poor Labourer, who never yet received a Spiritual Benefit from thy teaching, nor hath no Heart to give thee any but againſt his Will? *Query* 2.

Canſt thou ever make it appear to be a Duty incumbent upon the Magiſtrate to ſettle thee Wages by a Law, or it lawful for thee to take it? *Query* 3.

it? If thou canſt, it is high time to produce thy ſtrong Reaſons, leſt thy God *Dagon* fall to the Ground, and riſe no more; and with the reſt of thy Brother Craftſmen to ſhout high, leſt your Shrine-making be marr'd for ever.

Query 4. Will not thy Trade be as long-lived as the World, if Academies can give thee Qualifications, Men an Ordination, and the Magiſtrates Maintenance? But *Babel* muſt fall.

Concerning the Power of Magiſtrates in Spiritual things.

Poſition. That the Magiſtrate hath Power, both coercive and punitive, againſt all evil, either in Words or Works, whether it be againſt a private or a publick Intereſt, is manifeſt.

Argum. 1. Becauſe all Men, even as Men, have this impreſſed in them by the Light of Nature, Principles ſuckt in by Education, or a Light from God upon their Spirits, That the End of being is its own Preſervation; and as this is ingrafted in one, ſo it is in all Individuals; and as they would not be willing that any other ſhould hurt

hurt or destroy their being, nor hinder the meer Necessaries of its Conservation; so it is contrary to natural Justice and right Reason, to hurt or destroy the being of another, or to hinder them of meer Necessaries for their Conservation. And all Laws were at first intended, and should be exercised, to preserve unto every Numerical Person (as far as possible) these grand Privileges of Nature's universal Charter; and therefore what Acts or Words soever may tend to the obstructing or frustrating of this End, is in the Magistrate's Power to restrain and punish. And for this purpose the Apostle beareth Witness, that *the Gentiles who had no external Law* given of God, *were a Law unto themselves; which did shew the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience bearing Witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.* Rom. 2 14, 15.

The Scriptures make this clear, commanding *every Soul to be subject unto the higher Powers, because there is no Power but of God. The Powers that be are ordained of God.* And *whosoever re-* *Arg.* 2. Rom. 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation. And *these are the Ministers of God for the Defence and Praise of those that do well, and for the Punishment of those that do evil, for they bear not the Sword in vain.* And therefore the Apostle concludes, that the Christians should be subject unto these Ministers (though Heathens) *not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience Sake; and for this Reason was Tribute to be paid unto them, because they were the Ministers of God attending upon that very thing continually.* And thus were all the Saints commanded *to obey every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's Sake, whether of Kings or others; and that Prayers and Supplications should be made for Kings, and all that were in Authority, that they might lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty.*

1 Pet. 2. 13.

1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.

Position 2. But now the grand Scruple is, what Power the Magistrate hath in those things that are called Spiritual: And by things Spiritual, I understand those things that the Apostles and other Saints taught and practised as Christians; for as Men, they were

were in their Words and Actions (as is proved before) under the Power of the Magistrate. And in all those things that they held, taught or practised, I find evidently these two. 1. They never required any thing of the Magistrates (as they were Christians) but only Liberty to speak out the things that Christ had manifested unto them; and quietly to meet together to break Bread, pray, baptize, edifie, or communicate to the Wants of one another. 2. Nothing that they spoke or did (as Christians) was any way injurious, contrary, hurtful, or obstructive to the Civil Laws, either of the Jews or Gentiles.

I never read, that they desired of the Magistrate, Honour or Riches, Lordships or Dominions, nor to be called Doctors, Masters, Rabbies; or to have the Preheminence and chief Seats one above another, as ours now adays, that call themselves Christians, must have a Law to make them Masters, Doctors, and Batchelors of Divinity (as they are pleased vainly to stile them) and that not had but with a vast Expence *Argu.* 1.

pence

pence to the Common-wealth (in allowing ſuch large Revenues of Lands and Tithes to maintain an Hive of Drones, Waſps and Hornets in their Monkiſh Cells) which might be better imployed for enabling Men in Arts and Sciences to fit them for civil Imployments, and not to paint up a Bladder-blown Clergy (another falſe Title they have aſſumed to themſelves) with ſuch idle Terms and vain Epithites. It is true, that the Diſciples being but earthly and carnal, had much ado among themſelves, *who ſhould be greateſt*; but our Saviour tells them, *That the Kings or Rulers of the Nations did bear Rule over their People, and were called gracious Lords, but it ſhould not be ſo among them, but he that would be greateſt ſhould become leaſt, and he that would be Maſter, ſhould become as a Servant.* And *Zebedee's Children* (being of the ſame carnal Principle with the reſt) could *deſire to ſit, the one at his right hand, and the other at his left in his Kingdom*; but he told them, *they knew not what they asked.* And the Scribes and Phariſees loved *the uppermoſt Seats in the Synagogues, and at*

Mat. 20.20, 21,22,23, 24,25,26, 27,28.

Mark 12.38. 39.

at Feasts, and Greetings in the Market-place, and to be called of Men Rabbi, Rabbi, but the Disciples were forbidden these things.

I never read, that the poor Disciples, or any other Saints desired of the Magistates Tithes or Augmentations, Money or Maintenances for their Pains taken about the things of Christ. They desired not of the Magistrates any Authority, Licenses, Commissions or Orders for their preaching the Message that God had put into their Mouths. But now our *Sons of Belial* will *strike their Flesh-hook with three Teeth into the Pan and Caldron, and if the People will not give them of the Sacrifices they will take it by Force*, and so wage Law against the poor People; but the Judgment of *Eli*'s Sons is hastening upon them, and if they make not a great Uproar and Noise, their great *Diana* falls for ever. *Argu.* 2.

I never read that the Disciples or Christians in their Days did desire the Magistrate to punish, kill, accuse, condemn or imprison any that received not their Doctrine; no, they were but *to shake off the Dust of their Feet as a Witness against them.* Nor did they desire *Argu.* 3. Mar. 6. 11.

to have the Magistrate to punish any that fell away from their Doctrine into other Opinions, though never so gross; but all that they did was by a Spiritual Power to deliver them to *Satan*, and that also for this End, even *for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus.*

1 Cor. 5. 4, 5.

Argu. 4. All that I find that they declared the Magistrate had no Power to hinder them of, was the speaking the things of God, wherein they were bound to obey God rather than Men; and in this Case the Counsel of *Gamaliel* was both true and precious, *That they should abstain from these Men, and let them alone; for if that Counsel or Work were of Men, it would come to nought: But if it were of God, it cannot be overthrown*, and so in opposing of it, Men may be found Fighters against the Holy Ghost.

Act. 5. 38, 39.

Argu. 1. 2. Neither did they act or speak (as Christians) any thing that was destructive, or any way hurtful to the Power of the Civil Magistrate. For tho they were accused of divers Evils and Misdemeanors, as of being *Enemies to Cæsar, the Temple, and Laws, perverting of the People, for speaking blasphemous Words*

Act. 15. 2. and 2. 28. and 6. 13, 14.

Words against the Place of the Jewish Worship against the Law, to trouble the Cities, to teach Customs not lawful for them to observe that were Romans, and that they turned the World upside down; that they were Seducers, Hereticks, and that their Sect (as they were pleased to call it) *was spoken against every where*; and that *Paul* was *a pestilent Fellow, a Mover of Sedition amongst all the Jews throughout all the World, and a Ring-leader of the Sect of the Nazarens.* Yet were all these Accusations false and forged, and could not be proved against them: *For neither against the Law of the Jews, neither against the Temple, nor yet against* Cæsar, *had they offended any thing at all.*

Act. 16. 20, 21.

Acts 17. 5.

Acts 28. 22.

Acts 24. 5.

Act. 25. 8.

Nay, they were so far from being Disturbers of the Peace, or injurious to any Man, that their very Doctrine was to have, *as much as in them laid, Peace with all Men,* and not to *suffer for evil doing, but well:* And it was their Practice, that *being reviled, they did bless, and being persecuted they did suffer, and being defamed they did intreat.* Nay, they were so far from doing evil, or opposing the civil Power, that *Paul* being wrongfully accused by the Jews, had such

Argu. 2.

Rom. 12. 18.

1 Pet. 3. 14, 17.

1 Cor. 4. 12, 13.

Confidence even in the Justice of the Heathenish Magistrate, and his own Innocency, with God's Assistance, that he appealed unto *Cæsar*. But it is not so with those that pretend to be Saints now; for they will not be content without Maintenance from the Magistrate, or else they will resist and oppose.

Act. 25. 10, 11.

Position 3. The Civil Magistrate hath not any positive Power to punish any Man, or restrain any, for their Light, Judgment, Conscience, Opinion, or Way of Worship, if so be they act or speak nothing that is destractive or destructive to the Civil Power, or tending to the Breach of the Peace, or to injure one another: Which is manifest from these Grounds.

Arg. 1. Nothing ought to be restrained, condemned, or punished by the Civil Magistrate, in Relation to Judgment and Opinion, but as it is certainly and infallibly known to be erroneous, false, blasphemous, or heretical; nor any thing restrained or punished in respect of Worship, but what is infallibly known to be idolatrous, superstitions, and contrary to the Mind of God. But it is manifest, that Man, as

as *he is natural, knoweth not these things,* 1 Cor. 2. 14.
but *they are Foolishness unto him, neither can he discern them; for Men are altogether gone out of the way, and there is none of them that understands these things, no not one.* And then shall Man be a Judge of what he knows not, and give Sentence where he understands not at all? And if it be thought that Magistrates are to judge and punish these things as they are Christians, because it is said, that *the Saints shall judge the World.* 1. It cannot be proved that they are Christians because they are called so, nor that they are Saints because they think and call themselves so; for, *not he whom Man approveth, but he whom God approveth is justified.* 2. And tho it be true that the Saints do and shall judge the World, yet it is not by using any of the Civil Power or Authority of the World; for *Christ's Kingdom,* of which they are Members, *is not of this World:* And thus *Paul did not judge those things that were without;* and the Saints judging of the World was in spiritual Power, by a declarative witnessing against all Unrighteousness of Men, but no using of the civil Sword; for their *Weapons were not carnal* but spiri-

Psal. 14. 2, 3.

1 Cor. 6. 2.

1 Cor. 10. 18.

1 Cor. 5. 12, 13.

tual. And therefore the Magistrate is not the competent Judge of these things, and therefore hath no Power but what is negative, and so ought not to forbid them.

Argu. 2. But tho the Magistrate had the Spirit of discerning, without Error or Mistake, of what was true or false, Light or Darkness, both in Relation to Opinion and outward Worship, yet is not the Right and Judgment of these things given or granted unto him, tho he be as a God upon Earth; but it is the great and high Privilege and Prerogative of *Jesus Christ*, *by whom God will judge the World, according to Paul's Gospel*, and the very Gentiles for walking contrary to their own Light were judged of God, and not by Men, and of him *given up unto vile Affections*, as a just Punishment for sinning against Light; and therefore *the Father hath committed all Judgment unto the Son*, and he it is that is appointed *Judge of quick and dead; for all Power is given him both in Heaven and Earth*; for it is *God himself* in these Cases, and not Man, that is and will be *Judge*.

Rom. 1.26. and 2.16.

Joh. 5.22.

1 Pet. 4.5. 2 Tim. 4.1. Mat. 28.18. Psal. 50.6.

Argu. 3. Again, what *Tares* soever the *envious Man hath sown in the Field of the World*

World, of Lyes, Falſities, Errors, Blaſphemies, Hereſies, idolatrous and ſuperſtitious Worſhips, are not to be weeded forth by every Servant, nor by the Magiſtrate, *leſt they pluck up the Wheat alſo, but both muſt be let alone until the Harveſt*, and then the Lord will ſend Meſſengers that ſhall make a Separation: Therefore the Magiſtrate ought not to meddle with the plucking out of the Tares of Errors, Hereſies and falſe Worſhips; for thereby uſually the Wheat is pluckt up, and the Tares left; for the Saints of God have always been perſecuted and ſlain under the Pretence of rooting forth Errors, and deſtroying falſe Ways of Worſhip, and under Colour of *doing God good Service*: For it is evident that ſince the Magiſtrates have aſſumed to themſelves the Title of Chriſtians and pretended Power, nay alſo Will, and Skill of promoting the Cauſe of Chriſt, of ſetting up Forms, Profeſſions, and making Creeds, Confeſſions and Articles of Religion by the Power of Civil Authority; as alſo to eradicate Errors, Hereſies and falſe Worſhips, Antichriſt hath by that means had his Growth & Increaſe; apoſtaſie

Mat. 13.24, 25,26,27, 28,29,30.

staſie hath entred and prevailed Truth; (almoſt) in all Ages hath been ſtifled and ſuppreſſed, and the Saints perſecuted and butchered, as is too evident in Martyrology and Church Hiſtory. And this is all the Advantage that the Truth of Chriſt ever gained, or can have from the Authority of Men and the Power of the World.

Argu. 4. Alſo the Record of Truth doth witneſs that God in his unſearchable Wiſdom and Providence hath decreed, 1 Cor. 11. 19. *that Hereſies muſt come, that thoſe that are approved amongſt his Saint may be made manifeſt, and that it is of Neceſſity that Offences muſt come, tho there be a Wo to thoſe by whom they do come.* And Mat. 18. 7. therefore the Power of Man or Magiſtrates cannot fruſtrate the Purpoſe of God, but while they labour to do what belongs not unto them, they become *Fighters againſt God*, and ſo are given up to Blindneſs, and becauſe they *believed not the Truth, are given to believe Lies.*

Arg. 5. Moreover this Power hath been aſſumed by Men and Magiſtrates from no better a Ground than the rotten Foundation of Infidelity and Pride; out of Infidelity, in fearing and diſtruſting

ſtruſting that God was not powerful and wiſe enough of himſelf in his own ſpiritual Strength to carry on and accompliſh his own Work without the Wiſdom and Power of ſinful, weak and vain Man, *whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils, and his Help vain:* When the Kingdom and Cauſe of God is built only upon himſelf, that everlaſting Rock of Ages, and Chriſt is *that Stone, tho refuſed of Men, is choſen of God, and precious, and is become the chief in the Corner:* Even *that Stone coming out of the Rock without Hands, and cruſhing in pieces all the Images of Braſs, Iron or Clay* that ever the Power of Man erected or ſet up. And it proceeds out of Pride, Man vainly thinking in his Wiſdom and Power to make the Work of God more effectual than the Lord hath determined, and by the Rod of Fear and Terror to drive more into Heaven, than ever God hath decreed ſhall come there, or to force them in ſooner than his appointed Time, or by a Door that he never opened; not conſidering that the *Weakneſs of God is ſtronger than the Strength of Men,* and that *no Man can come* nor be driven unto Chriſt, *except the Father draw him.*

Pſa. 146. 3, 4.

1 Pet. 2. 4, 5. 6. 7.

Dan. 2. 34.

1 Cor. 1. 25.

Joh. 6. 44.

Laſtly,

Argu.6. Lastly, the Magistrate pretending to be Judge of the Consciences of Men, doth usurp the Place of God; for God himself will immediately raign there, and none can persuade nor change a Heart but God only; for *it is he that takes away stony Hearts, and gives Hearts of Flesh, takes away the old and gives new ones*; and no Creaturely Power is able to do it. And also thereby many are forced to become Hypocrites, and to sin against the Light of their own Conscience, or else to undergo Loss of Goods or Liberty, bodily Hurt, or Death, which is cruel and tyrannical, nay even against the Law of Nature; for who would desire tobe compell'd against the Light of his own Conscience? And therefore how unjust is it to compel anothers? This may make a Man a Proselyte, to say and profess with his Mouth, that which is contrary to the Intent and Belief of his Heart, and so to be *twofold more the Child of Perdition than formerly.*

Ezek.18.31. & 11. 19.

Object.1. Some object, that the Jewish Magistrates had Power to punish Idolatry and Blasphemy; and why have not the Magistrates among the Christians the like Power?

1. Be-

1. Becauſe we are not under the ſame Adminiſtration, nor are their Laws obligatory to us; *for the Prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a Change alſo of the Law.* *Solution.* Heb. 7.12.

2. Becauſe we have not the ſame Means to inſtruct and direct us in giving Judgment in ſuch abſtruſe and deep Matters; for they had extraordinary Direction by the *Urim* and *Thummim*, and by their Prophets, both of which we want; we have none that can make Fire come down from Heaven as *Elijah* did to confound *Baals* Prophets withal; and therefore where there are not like Premiſſes, there cannot be like Concluſions.

Others object, that there is a Power that the Diſciples had and exerciſed, to cenſure and deliver to *Satan*, as in Caſe of Inceſt; and of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* denying the Reſurrection; and the *Angel of the Church in Thyatira is threatned, becauſe he had ſuffered Jezabel to teach and ſeduce the Servants of God*, and therefore that there remains a coercive and punitive Power, if not in the Magiſtrates, at leaſt in the Miniſters and Churches, and therefore it is lawful to exerciſe that. *Object.* 2. Rev. 2.20.

1. It

Solution. 1. It is true, that the Apostles and primitive Churches had by their Directions a Power to retain Sins, and to deliver to *Satan*; but this was not an external Power of Man or the Sword, but was spiritual, and stood in the Power of Christ; for the Apostle saith,

1 Cor. 5.4,5. *In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together and my Spirit, with the Power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one to Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus.* Now this was done in the Power Christ, and so as no Church now can shew the like, tho they seem to imitate it.

2. This was not done by inflicting any external Punishment upon him, but that the rest of the Saints were to forbear such an ones Company, *even*

1 Cor. 5.11. *to eat with him*, and consisted not in some violent thrusting out such an one from their Houses or Company, but in withdrawing themselves away from him; for the Apostle warns and commands the believing Thessalonians

2 Thes. 3.6, 14. in *the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they should withdraw themselves from every Brother that walketh disorderly; and*

if

if any did not obey his Word in that Epiſtle, they ſhould note ſuch an one, and have no Company with him, that he might be aſhamed.

3. For that of the Angel of the Church in *Thyatira*, it contains a very high and great Myſtery, more than Man's Wit can conceive by the Letter; yet it is clear that they ſhould not have ſuffered her; but what was it they ſhould have reſtrained or reſiſted her withal? Not with carnal Weapons (for the Saints wear not ſuch) but with ſpiritual, which were mighty and powerful in Chriſt.

2. Thoſe rebuked there were ſuch as *had her Doctrine*, and thoſe threatned were ſuch as had *committed Fornication with her*, and therefore by *ſuffering her*, was to have imbraced her Doctrine; but thoſe *that had it not, nor had known the Depths of Satan*, they were not reproved or threatned at all, but exhorted *only to hold faſt until Chriſt ſhould come.* Rev. 2.22, 24, 25.

Conſectaries.

There is nothing in the Goſpel either in Doctrine or Practice, that is *Conſect.* 1.

de-

destructive or destructive to the Civil Power, nor any way hurtful or injurious unto Men. And therefore whatsoever Doctrine or Practice is destructive to Magistracy, or tends to break the Peace or injure any Man, the same hath no Ground in the Gospel, and is an Evil that the Magistrate hath Power to restrain and punish.

Conf. 2. All the Liberty that Christians have, or can claim of or from the Magistrate, is only negative and permissive, that they should not forbid and hinder them to declare the things that God hath revealed in them, and commanded them to utter; nor prohibite them the Way of their Worship and serving of God.

Conf. 3. The Magistrate hath an unquestionable Power to restrain and punish every Word and Action of Man that tends to the Disturbance of the Civil State, or to the Prejudice of others; and is bound to uphold nothing of Christian Religion, either with the Sword, or with Mony or Maintenance; and therefore those that require Pay from the State to uphold their Religion, ought in that Point so far to be restrained, as to be denied it, and none allowed them. Then

Then whatſoever a Man's Opinion or Way of Worſhip be (if he live peaceably amongſt Men both in Word and Work, and faithfully and obediently towards the Civil Power) the Magiſtrate ought (without Reſpect to his Judgment or Way of Worſhip) to protect and defend him, and not at all to intermeddle with him in Regard of either. *Conſ.* 4.

Queries.

If the Magiſtrate (not having Infallibility of Judgment) do by Law eſtabliſh one or more Forms of Religion, and compel Men to comform thereunto, may not one or all thoſe be idolatrous and erroneous? And ſome way not allowed by Law, be the only Way of Truth in Chriſt? *Query* 1.

Can a Magiſtrate drive more into Heaven than the Father hath determined to draw thither? Or can he be wiſer than the Spirit of Chriſt to teach and direct Men the Way to eternal Life? *Query* 2.

Doth any Form of Religion neceſſarily entail the Grace of God upon thoſe that walk in it? Or can any Form keep out the Spirit and Grace of God when it will enter? *Query* 3.

Doth

Query 4. Doth any Power of the Magistrate really and truly change the Heart, tho it make the Tongue confess, and the Person in external Worship conform to the Form and Religion established?

Query 5. Is it not against the Law of Nature, and the Light imprinted in us, to do that to another we would not have done to our selves; to compel another, when we would not be compelled?

Request 1 If any one out of Tenderness of Conscience, Lowliness of Mind, or Love of the Truth, desire further Satisfaction in the Particulars handled herein, I shall be willing (as far as the Lord in Mercy shall inable me) either by Conference or otherwise to give them what Content and Assistance lies in my Power.

Request 2 If any one be unsatisfied with the Truths herein contained, and judge them unsound or erroneous, and so have a Desire to confute them, or argue against them: I only intreat them plainly and fully to make it manifest out of what Principle they speak, whether from the Spirit of Truth, or from the Ground of humane Learning and Reason; and according to the Presence of the Lord with me they shall receive a Responsion. *FINIS.*